

3. On a Case of Cross-breeding between two Species of Fly-catchers of the genus *Rhipidura*. By THOMAS H. POTTS, of Ohinitaki, New Zealand.

[Received October 27, 1884.]

The writer has repeatedly drawn attention to the interesting fact of the occasional crossing between *Rhipidura flabellifera* and *R. fuliginosa* (see Trans. N. Z. Inst. vols. ii., iii., v., & vi.; also N. Z. Journal of Science, July 1884). It is noticeable that this fact is not alluded to in the 'Manual of the Birds of New Zealand,' published in 1882, by authority of the Colonial Museum and Geological Survey Department.

In order to bring this peculiar habit more prominently before ornithologists, I forward a nest and eggs for the inspection of members of the Zoological Society of London.

I found the nest on Sept. 10, and took it this morning; it contained three eggs. Before I removed it, I saw both parent birds undertake the duties of incubation in turn, relieving each other at brief intervals. The cock bird was *R. fuliginosa*, with the aural plumes very small but quite distinct; the hen, *R. flabellifera*, occupied the nest till gently pushed off with the finger.

In Trans. N. Z. Institute, vol. iii. p. 80, will be found some account of the nests of *Rhipidura*, specimens of which were taken both on Banks' Peninsula and in the Malvern district to the west.

Ohinitaki, September 12, 1884.

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November 18, 1884.

Prof. W. H. Flower, LL.D., F.R.S., President, in the Chair.

The Secretary read the following report on the additions to the Society's Menagerie during October 1884:—

The total number of registered additions to the Society's Menagerie during the month of October was 108, of which 47 were by presentation, 17 by purchase, 10 by birth, 7 received in exchange, and 27 received on deposit. The total number of departures during the same period, by death and removals, was 132.

Amongst them special attention was called to a Black-necked Coly (*Colius nigricollis*), purchased October 20th, being the first example of this species received alive by the Society. (See Plate XLV. fig. 1.)

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The following extracts were read from a letter addressed to the Secretary by Mr. J. G. F. Riedel, C.M.Z.S.:—

"I beg leave to say a few words on Mr. Forbes's recent observations (*suprà*, p. 425) concerning the birds collected on Timorlao by my hunters, and described by Dr. A. B. Meyer, as also concerning some of Mr. Forbes's remarks on the island-group itself.

"Before the arrival of Mr. Forbes in the Moluccas I had forwarded

birds from Timorlao and Tanembar to Europe, as I also did after his departure. I cannot understand why he should wish (p. 426) to discredit my hunters, who can all read and write; they had in former years accompanied many naturalists, such as Hoedt, Beccari, and others, and are thoroughly trustworthy. My hunters were collecting on the Tanembar and Timorlao islands for three years following, viz. on Motu, Larat, Lutur, Leera, and on the large island of Yamdena near Botani, Atemar, Wermatan, and on Selaru near Adau, therefore on many more places than Mr. Forbes's hunters. On Larat and Lutur Mr. Forbes did not penetrate into the country, as his hunters themselves and the Dutch official on Ritabel (a half-caste) assured me, being afraid of the people of Keliobar and being besides ill with fever in consequence of being insufficiently provided with the necessary food. The European superintendence of my hunters, which Mr. Forbes thinks necessary, is quite superfluous with men of their experience. My hunters also collected on Keei, Aru, and other places, and always attached labels to the birds with the habitat and the sex. Therefore no birds from other islands came into the collection from Timorlao and Tanembar, as Mr. Forbes conjectures may have been the case.

"Mr. Forbes further asserts, that the group of islands under consideration is only one, but bears two different names (p. 426), whereas in fact the natives use these two names for different parts of the group, and look on each part as a group for itself. To the Tanembar group belong:—Motu, Nuskalboor, Nusnitu, Wajanga, Maru, Kiabelenga, Nuslima, Virinun, Watborat, Nuskabawa, Nuskarata, Barnusa, Vordata, Watsira, Nukahao, Larat, Lutur, Nusanlao, Slear, Mitak, Kokolat, Wawoan, Teen, Nemaan, Nustemar, Laibobar, Taval, Wulmali or Bulumali, Tual, Unggar, Myanatraa, Nuswotar, Nujanatroot, Wuliaru, Nustaran, Wolas, Kesiwu, Seelunsnitu, Salal, Sekeleer, Manu, Seera, Molin, Watuwawan, Nuskee, Lokihinilavon, Kamitwaan, Watsalat, Tendula, Kotkola, and Watletan. The islands which belong to the Timorlao group are Yamdena or Yanatleer, Anggarmasa, Vual or Tual, Erikmiri, Watleran, Nustawon or Nustabun, Watkusa, Najanat, Watdua, Nuskesa, Watsira, Solat, Selaru, and Ariama.

"The name Timorlao signifies the far east, from lao=far and timor=east, as Nusalao the far island, Seranglao the far Serang. It is erroneous to suppose that Timorlao is a corruption of the word for "seaward Timor" (p. 429), for lao is not =lawut (of the Malay). Mr. Forbes therefore is quite wrong in altering Dr. A. B. Meyer's specific name "*timorlaoensis*" into "*timorlautensis*;" and as to the euphony of a word, it is difficult to dispute between different tongues, especially if the Latin is pronounced after the English fashion."

Utrecht, Nov. 1st, 1884.

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The following papers were read:—